

[Mrs. Nettie Falconer Allen]

1

Life History

Folklore,

Miss Effie Cowan,

McLennan County, Texas,

District 8. [?] 1250

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“Interview with Mrs Nettie Falconer Allen, White Pioneer, Marlin, Tex.

“My father Willis Lang Falconer, who departed this life in 1929 at the age of 81 years, was a member of the firm of Nettles and Falconer, Architects, and [?]. He was also a farmer and stockman. He with the family came to Falls county in 1885 from Clark county Mississippi. He was born in Wayne county, Mississippi, June 27, 1848 and was a son of the Hon. Thomas Falconer, a planter and lawyer and owner of slaves , who o was Judge of his district. Judge Falconer was born in South Carolina and died in 1849, aged fifty years. He was twice married, his first wife being a Miss reagh Creagh , who at her death

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left children named William, Thomas and John, the oldest and youngest were Confederate soldiers. All of whom are now deceased.

“For his second wife Judge Falconer married Miss Jerusha Lang, who at the age of thirty six years passed away in 1858, leaving one child Willis Lang Falconer. (my father.) Father was reared by an aunt and attended the public schools of his vicinity. In 1864 he joined Company E. Mormans battalion, General Wirt Adams brigade, and saw service in the Confederate army. His detachment was detailed to run down deserters until near the end of the war. When the end of hostilities came he was under General Forrest's command / and was discharged at Gainsville, Alabama, their returned home. After he came home he attended school at Pierce Springs, Mississippi. He was engaged in farming up to 1870 on the home plantation. he The country abounded in game of all kind and when he was not at work on the plantation he spent a great part of time hunting. [???] 2 When we moved to Texas father farmed on the Billingsley estate. Mr Billingsley was a relative and sent for him. We lived in the town of Marlin, Texas and the Billingsley plantation was located some seven or eight miles up the river between Marlin and Waco, in the Brazos bottom. Later father and Mr Nettles of Marlin became partners on a more extensive scale in the stock and farming business and [remainined?] remained together until their death.

“In those early days the political parties were unsettled, there were the Populist, on which ticket father was elected in 1894 as county clerk of Falls county and served a term. The Greenback and the Union Labor and Peoples party were in close race with / the democrats. But in the end the Democratic party was accepted as the standard for the south.

“In 1869 my father married my mother, who was Miss Emma Shaw, a daughter of Theodore Shaw of Wayne county Mississippi. To them were born the following children Bolivar, George, myself, Mary, Daisy, Albert, Theodore, Roberta, Willis and Emma both of whom died when four years of age.

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"My brother Bolivar Lang Falconer entered the Civil Service of the United States and filled both positions in several departments at Washington before his appointment as a member of the Civil Service Bureau at Manilla Manila, Phillipine Philippine Islands. He was retired in 1931 as Senior Examiner of the United States Civil Service Commission. 3 "The following is a clipping from the Marlin Democrat , "Since Dr Falconer's retirement from the Civil Service Commission he has spent his time in travelling all over the world, having encircled it four times and visited every continent. He has spent several months in New Zealand and Austria and in the interior of China, had toured Asia overland from China through India, Africa from Cape Town to Cairo (Cape to Cairo Route) and South America from Panama down the West Coast to Chile, across the Andes to Argentina, and up the East Coast through Brazil and the West Indies to Boston. He is now about to start on a trip around the world by air, hoping to be the first passenger to accomplish this feat."

"He expected to fly left Marlin May 6, and flew from Dallas to New York on May 7, 1936, and left New York on May 10, on the maiden voyage of the new zeppelin, the Von Hindenberg and arrived in Frankfort Germany on May 13 : left Amsterdam May 15, on a dutch Dutch plane, arrived at Batavia, Java, on May 22, spending one night each in Rome, Cairo, Bagdad, Jodpur, Rangoon and Singapore. From Batavia he took a chartered plane and flew from Borneo to Manila. He reached Manila May 26, and had he been allowed to return on the China Clipper he would have made his trip on schedule of thirty days , around the world and back to Dallas.

"But the China Clipper did not at this time take passengers, so he spent the imte time in Manilla until November of 1936. By this time the airship China Clipper had commenced to carry passengers and he made the return trip on it, by way of Gaum, Wake, Midway and Oahu, all islands belonging to the United States. He is now completing his sixth trip around the world, this time by airship, steamer and train. 4 "Dr Bolivar Falconer has obtained the degree of M.D. from Georgetown University, of Sc.M. in eurology Neurology from George ashington Washington University; and A.M. in Mathematics from Harvard University. He is

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a member of the University clubs of Paris and Manilla, the Pans-Pacific Club of Honolulu, and several other clubs and societies. He is liscensed to practice medicine in Washington and Manila.

“The remain remaing members of my father s father's family are George, who is a stockman of Falls county, myself, Mary; who married Professor Winkler of Nashvill Nashville Tennessee(deceased). Daisy; who has done governm nt government service. Albert, who died in the Phillipines June 27, 1910. and was buried in Marlin the following Augus August, after nine years in the customs service. Theodore who was also in the customs service and oberta Roberta , a teacher. The two younger ones Willis and Emma who died in [?] childhood .

“In the days when we first came to Marlin the town was just a small place and we children spent our time as other children in he town, we attended the public schools and then each of us took our course at some college. I attended Peabody, at Nashville , Tennessee , and completed a course to become a teacher. I taught in the public schools until I established my own home when I married.

“I can remember when the first automobiles were introduced to our town. There were three doctors who first bought cars, Dr Allen, Dr Torbett, and Dr Snead. They had a time driving them over the rough country roads, together with the teams on the roads becoming frightened and [?] running away , made the drivers of the new way of travel nerveous nervous wrecks at times. 5 “On the 18th, day of January, 1899 I married Dr Walter H. Allen a practicing physician of Marlin, Texas. Dr Allen was born September 18, 1868, and his parents were John W. and Mary H. Allen, who for a number of years were engaged in the hotel business in Marlin. Dr Allens father came to Texas in 1857, from Limestone county, Alabama, where he was born in 1837. His mothers parents were James Mc Cain and Frances A. Mann; the mothers birth occurred ten years after her husband in Tennessee, where they lived for many years. For several years after coming to Texas , John Allen engaged in the mercantile business at Marlin until the war between the states drew him

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into the ranks of the Confederacy, where he served in a regiment under Hoods brigade, and at the second battle of Manassas he lost his left arm at the shoulder.

“Dr Allens father's usefulness as a soldier being at an end, he came home and devoted himself to his duties as a citizen of Marlin until 1871, when he removed to California / and engaged in business in Pacheco, that state, for four years. Dissatisfied with the Pacific coast and remembering his former place of business at Marlin he returned and engaged in the hotel business at this place, carrying it on successfully until the years uear 1892, since which date he retired, he and his wife were the parents of three children Lea E. Allen of [?] Llano Texas, Dr Walter H. Allen, (my husband), and W.W. Allen.

While four years of his Dr Allen's boyhood was passed in / California, the chief part was in Marlin. His education was obtained at the public school's schools , in / Marlin, and in 1885 he entered the A. & M. College at College Station. 6 “He graduated at A. & M. College in 1888, taking the degree of B. S. A. At graduation and in this class he was first honor man and senior captain of the corps of cadets. In August after his graduation he entered the drug store of the late Dr R. C. Nettles, where he spent two years and a half , engaged in practical pharmacy until he took up the study of medicine.

“In 1890 he entered the Missouri Medical College at St Louis, afterwards entering the Tulane University of New Orleans, where he graduated in medicine in 1892. He then returned to Marlin and took up the practice of his profession, where he was very successful. In a business way he owned the Allen drug store of Marlin; was a stockholder in the First State Bank and of the Marlin Hot Well Company, while at the same time he owned some farming land in Falls county. Professionally he held membership in the Mc Lennan County Medical Association, and in the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

“To Dr and Mrs Allen were born the folowing children, Willis Lang, an in business at Houston Texas, Walter H. who is in the employ of the Home Benefit Association of Marlin, Texas, Bolivar A. of El Dorado Ark, who is in the oil business, and Emily, deceased.

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"After the Marlin hot mineral water became famous for its healing of the afflicted, especially stomach trouble and rheumatism, Dr Allen owned and operated what is now the Buie hospital and Clinic, where the hot water mineral baths were so successfully given that he became one of Marlin's best physicians in the treatment of these troubles. Many have been the expressions of gratitude from his patients. 7 .

"Marlin is situated only a few miles from the Brazos river, in the spring of the year , the river often is on a ride. It overflows the lowlands for a distance of several miles at places. In the days before drainage had been established, and even at the present times, it is not uncommon for the river to overflow into the nearby farms and get up into the houses of those living in the bottom. Many have been the times that rescuers from the country and town had to go out in the night and bring in the victims of the floods. Some times down in the bottom the negroes who lived there would have to climb up on their house-tops and wait for some one to come to their aid. They were, as a rule , removed from the houses and treetops and placed in wagons and brought into town, if the water kept rising, then they were rescued with boats.

"It was just such a flood in the spring of 1922, May 16, 1922, that the long bridge over the Brazos river just west of Marlin showed signs of weakening on the farther end, the bank was caving in and truck and heavy loaded vehicles were on it to hold it down. It was thought there was no immediate danger of a span giving away as the bank on the west end of the bridge had been reinforced. It was a beautiful day after the big rains and a large part of the population of Marlin, together with a few of the visitors (taking the baths) rode out to see the bridge. Many went out on the bridge to get a better view of the far end. Among them was my husband, Dr Allen, all at once there was a loud report and the weak span of the bridge gave way, and with it a number of people went down into the river, a few never to return in life. 8 .

"Among the number who lost their lives on this day, were Dr Allen, [and?] the mayor of Marlin, Mr Stallworth, a child and a visitor to the city, a woman who was in Marlin for the

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baths. This was a time of intense anxiety and istress distress . The men rushed to the river from town immediately and cast ropes out into the river to catch the odies bodies as they floated down stream. The visiting woman and child were rescued at once, but it was a week before Dr Allen Allen's or Mr Stallworths Stallworth's body was found. It is with a feeling of gratitude to the citizens of Marlin that I say they camped for a week at the river. The divers and other [?] never leaving, the women brought them their food and continually for a week they kept faithful / watch for the bodies. In a week there came another rise in the river and the timbers of the bridge rose and floated down the river, and with some of the tim timber the body of Dr Allen and Mr Stallworth came down and were seen and rescued. They were buried just a week from the day they lost their lives.

“Many lives in the days gone by, in our own time , has the hungry river claimed for its own, but while it takes from us, it also gives to those who depend on its contrubution to the land. It is well known that the rich soil [of?] the Brazos bottom has its production increased by the deposits of the floods. It has done its part toward making the country prosperous as it wends its way to the Gulf of Mexico, now angry, then peaceful, forgetful of the sorrow it leaves in its angry moods. [“?] Saturday A.M.

Dear Mrs Davis; In the paragraphs in the Allen story, of Dr Falsoner, (Mrs Allens brother,) I forgot to mention the fact the Dr Falconer has established an endowment fund for a teachers salary in the crippled childrens hospital in Marlin. (His sister made him give it the job to her recently , I heard). at Marlin. the The fund takes care of the equipment needed in the school room. Also he has also established a picture show fund whereby the crippled children who do not have the money to go to the show may be enabled to go. You can insert this if you desire. This is authentic.